



## MEMORANDUM

February 20, 2013

To: Planning Commission

From: Manisha Tewari, Planner *MT*

Via: David Levy, Chief of Long Range Planning *DL*

Subject: Amending the Municipal Growth Element of Rockville's Comprehensive Master Plan – Continue discussion on Maximum Expansion Limits Meeting of February 27, 2013

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On January 23, 2013, the Planning Commission reviewed the scope of work for the project to review and potentially amend the Municipal Growth Element (MGE) of Rockville's Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP), and provided preliminary guidance to staff on the Maximum Expansion Limits (MELs). Since then, planning staff has met with other city staff and discussed the topic at a Senior Staff meeting with the City Manager and Department Directors. The result, presented in this memorandum, is proposed criteria for inclusion in the MELs and a map with the proposed new MELs.

### **Proposed Criteria for Inclusion in MELs**

The following criteria were considered while developing the proposed Maximum Expansion Limits (MELs):

- Placing properties in Rockville's MEL does not obligate Rockville to carry through an actual annexation. Rockville will carry out actual annexation of a property only if it is deemed to be in the long-term interest of the city at the time of the proposed annexation and, in most cases, when there is interest from the property owner.
- Rockville and the region as a whole are facing significant growth pressures. Much of this growth is occurring outside the City limits, where the city has no control over the type of development and its consequent impacts, both positive and negative. The City of Rockville should expand its MELs in order to harness the fiscal benefits of regional growth and

remain competitive, and allow more options for annexation of properties, especially where growth and redevelopment are likely just outside of current boundaries.

- Including growth areas within our MELs provides options for the City to guide growth in a manner that is consistent with the City's character and identity, as well as Master Plan goals and policies.
- Properties within Rockville's MELs should have the potential to yield economic benefits to the City, if annexed. Fiscal analysis would be conducted when considering actual annexation petitions. Such fiscal analysis would include, among other considerations, the proposed future land use; the resulting anticipated revenues from that land use; anticipated additional operating costs to the City; and anticipated required capital costs, including how much of these costs would be borne by the City.
- MELs should include areas for which there is a reasonable possibility that annexation would occur. Defining appropriate MELs will allow the City to formulate its annexation policy and strategy.
- Shady Grove Road will no longer be a limiting boundary for the City's MELs.

### **Proposed new MEL Boundaries**

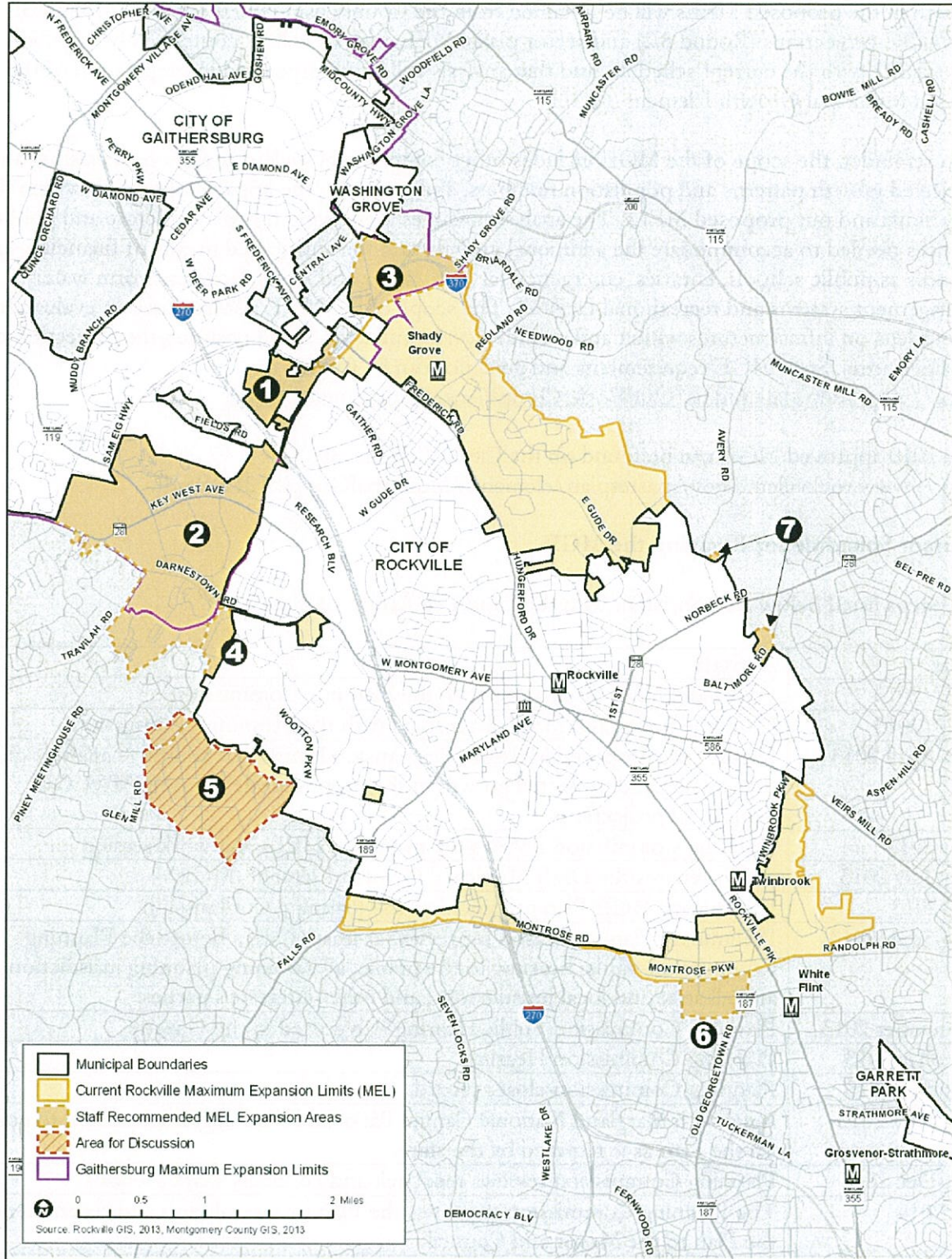
The following proposed MEL map (Figure 1) incorporates input from the Planning Commission, the above-listed criteria, and feedback from the senior staff meeting on February 12, 2013. The map shows areas that staff recommends for discussion on February 27, most of which are recommended as part of the expanded MEL boundaries. Areas shown are:

- 1) Washingtonian Light Industrial area
- 2) Life Sciences Center – part of the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan area
- 3) Oakmont Industrial area
- 4) Along Glen Mill Road
- 5) South of Viers Road
- 6) Executive Boulevard area
- 7) Small additions along Rockville's eastern boundaries.

Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission discuss the areas as proposed and provide direction on the MELs.



**Figure 1: Staff-Recommended Maximum Expansion Limits**





Once the MELs are determined, staff will conduct the State-required analysis on the existing conditions and proposed growth in the identified MEL areas. Data on the existing and projected growth in the proposed MELs will be obtained from the County using the most recent round of MWCOG projections (Round 8.2) and sector plans. MEL analysis will be completed by May, in accordance with the current schedule, and that analysis will be incorporated in preparation of the revised Municipal Growth Element (MGE).

As a reminder, the scope of the MGE includes other components such as inclusion of existing and projected growth patterns and population numbers, and analyzing the impacts of growth within the City limits and our proposed MELs. The analysis includes identifying the infrastructure and public services needed to accommodate the additional growth, and the anticipated means of financing such services as public schools, libraries, emergency services, water and sewer facilities, storm water management systems and recreational facilities. The scope of the MGE also requires an evaluation of burdens on infrastructures within and outside development areas and ensuring the protection of sensitive areas. State MGE requirements and guidance can be found at:

<http://www.mdp.state.md.us/OurWork/CompPlans/Requirements.shtml>.

The 2010 approved MGE can be found on the City's Web site, at <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/masterplan/elements/MunicipalGrowth121310.pdf>.

### **Current Schedule for Revising the MGE**

The steps listed below are consistent with the Land Use Article of State Law:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
2/27/2013	Policy and MEL discussions with the Planning Commission
3/20/2013	Continue policy and MEL discussions with the Planning Commission
Feb-April 2013	Finalize the proposed Maximum Expansion Limits and complete analysis on the existing and projected growth in the proposed MELs using MWCOG Round 8.2 projections.
May 2013	Planning Commission reviews the proposed MELs at a work session
May-July 2013	Staff prepares the Draft Municipal Growth Element (MGE)
July 2013	Preliminary MGE Plan presented to the Planning Commission
Aug-Sept, 2013	Preliminary Plan is released for review at least 60 days before the Planning Commission public hearing, to the public, all adjoining planning jurisdictions, and all state and local jurisdictions, and other interested parties.
September 2013	Planning Commission Public Hearing Advertised in the Gazette
October 2013	Planning Commission Hearing
October 2013	Planning Commission closes record
Oct-Nov 2013	Meet with Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission to confer on the Plan as is required by the state.
Oct-Dec 2013	Planning Commission reviews feedback and conducts work sessions
Jan 2014	The Planning Commission approves the Plan by a resolution and recommends the Plan to the Mayor and Council
Feb 2014	Staff presents Planning Commission Plan to the Mayor and Council
Feb 2014	Mayor and Council Public Hearing Advertised (twice) in the Gazette
March 2014	Mayor and Council conduct Public Hearing

March 2014	Mayor and Council close Public Record
March-April 2014	Mayor and Council conduct Worksessions Discussion and Instructions to staff
May 2014	Mayor and Council Introduce Resolution
May 2014	Mayor and Council Adopt of Resolution
May 2014	The adopted Municipal Growth Element is sent to the Maryland Department of Planning.

This schedule is tentative and may change for various reasons.

Cc: Susan Swift, Director, CPDS  
Craig Simoneau, Director of Public Works

